

# Expressions on Woman Suffrage From Some Prominent Tulsa People

## A Woman's Viewpoint

My appeal to the voters of Oklahoma is to weigh the matter of suffrage for himself. Forget the organizations for and against it. Women have the life of the world in their hands. What greater honor do they want than that they have given life and courage to the men of this generation. This war has clearly demonstrated her mission to comfort and solace the weary and heavy laden minds and hearts not only of men but women and children. The call comes continually from France for America's best women to be sent over for hospital and other service. Their presence is just as necessary to the winning of this war as are guns and ammunition. The mere labor can be accomplished by men but it is the God given privilege of woman to be the mainspring of strength to man when stricken in mind and body. It is not a mere sentimentality. The war department and commanders of armies know this only too well. They cannot perform the God given tasks of women. Can women perform the God given tasks of men? This not a question of intellect. It is the old question. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."

MRS. PRESTON C. WEST.

## By A Tulsa Clergyman.

Tuesday next you are to sanction or disapprove by your ballot a change of the most revolutionary character in our political life. At the same time you will endorse or object to a change which will inevitably strike at the very existence of domestic life as we have always known it and lived it.

The question to be determined is whether or not the women of this state, your wife and daughters, are to be saddled, at the expense of the strength and interest nature designed for expenditure elsewhere, whether it is the general feminine will or not, with the heavy and responsible duty of suffrage.

For some months past we have been goaded into weariness or badgered into desperation by the wearying propaganda of a very noisy and persistent, though comparatively small, body of women and we citizens of Tulsa and the state of Oklahoma are in grave danger, out of the sheer weariness and desperation, produced by the dragging on to which we have been subjected, of voting affirmatively upon this subject without the calm and determined consideration it deserves. This is about the last call to summon resolution no longer to be badgered. This is about the last opportunity to get on our thinking caps and determine despite all nagging to think this matter over well before we commit ourselves irrevocably. Election day is but two days away.

We must face the fact first of all that if we make a mistake in the direction of suffrage, we make a mistake we cannot repair. The power of suffrage once given can never be recalled. Almost any other political error conceivable can be corrected in time and by proper methods, but the mistake of the suffrage power mistakenly bestowed is a mistake beyond recall and the everlasting damage is done except, perchance, the power be voluntarily surrendered by its recipients. And no one is so simple minded and inexperienced in the ways of the world as to suppose that either probable or possible.

We are to think well, then, before we sanction this change. And for the past year and a half we have not had, nor shall we have before election day, sufficient opportunity for such consideration. As a nation we have been passing through the most serious crisis in our history. From that crisis we have not yet emerged. We have been and are now thinking no thought and working no work except the thought and work of preserving our existence as a nation. Till the war is over and our job of smashing the kaiser is completely finished we shall have no time for even the smaller issues. We can have very much less for a subject that involves so much to political and domestic life as woman suffrage. The only safe thing to do is to vote this movement down next Tuesday. If the suffrage is ever to be enlarged according to the suffragist program let it be only after proper opportunity has been afforded for due consideration by all who shall be called upon to pronounce upon it.

Again, we are not to forget that an affirmative vote on this question may work a grave injustice to the great majority of women. Not the slightest indication has ever been forthcoming that the majority of women is desirous of the right of suffrage. The fact is that suffrage propaganda is the work of a comparatively small number of the women of this state, compactly organized and energetic it is true, but nevertheless small.

This little body of women has presumed to speak without commission for all their sisters. But so far from its being representative, there is abundant evidence of the fact that the majority of women do not want the vote. The suffragists themselves are evidently aware of the general feminine sentiment, for they have consistently refused to submit the question for decision to the women themselves through a plebiscite. They fear that the women themselves would put an end to the suffrage game if once they were afforded an opportunity. Voters, let us take proper time in considering this matter in all its bearings. Such time and opportunity are not to be had now. Let us vote against suffrage Tuesday. There is nothing about the issue that its consideration may not wait till a more convenient season.

## By Captain E. Constantin

I desire to record my judgment against the Suffrage Amendment to be voted on next Tuesday.

Everybody knows that I am not a politician, though I do feel deeply the obligation of every citizen to take an interest in those matters that concern the welfare of his government. It is to be regretted that the Suffragists have forced the issue at this time when the winning of the war calls for the undivided interest of everybody; that they have done so is in itself reason for their repudiation.

I am convinced the great mass of the women of Oklahoma not only do not desire the ballot, but are opposed to it. The militant Suffragist is in no sense a representative of the home-loving women of the state and nation. The strength of the movement, it seems

to me, lies wholly in the ability of a few women to make a noisy campaign and the fear of a great many politicians that that campaign will succeed. To me, the thing is fundamentally unsound. The cry "Votes for women" is not the natural slogan of a well balanced, happy American home. Many fine mothers desire the ballot, but do so, I think, mistakenly.

The active participation of ALL women in politics must tend towards the division of homes and the consequent disruption of society. The family life affords enough dispute now without adding to it the greatest irritant of all—politics. I am glad to be advised that Oklahoma on next Tuesday will record its faith in the old and best traditions of the country, and that the amendment will be beaten.

### Anti-Suffrage Leader at Muskogee Fair

Okla. News-Republican — Among the most interesting exhibits at the Muskogee Fair were those from the farm of Miss Alice Robertson. Miss Robertson, who has a pedigree herd of Jerseys, also exhibited 60 varieties of farm products besides the butter, cheese and milk from her dairy. Much of the produce from this splendidly equipped farm is used in the cafeteria which Miss Robertson manages in the city of Muskogee. For years Miss Robertson has been one of Muskogee's foremost citizens, having served as postmistress under three administrations and being known and loved by practically every person in the city. As a competent business woman, a keen politician and an unusually talented woman, there were many women who supposed Miss Alice would espouse the cause of Woman Suffrage, but instead Miss Robertson has rounded out a remarkable career of devotion to her city and state by becoming vice-president of the Oklahoma Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage. Every spare moment she has is devoted to the Red Cross where she heads the canteen service at Muskogee.



## By Judge James B. Diggs

Those who proclaim the right of woman to, and seek to confer on her the electoral franchise in the main, base such right on (a) the equality of the sexes; (b) the assumption that liability to taxation gives right to the ballot; (c) that women would aid in the enactment of laws generally known as "welfare laws"; (d) that woman's patriotic support of the war entitles her to the ballot; and, according to the local campaign slogan, (e) the physical fact that women bring all men into the world.

Let us briefly examine the different postulates on which the right to the electoral franchise is based in their order and determine what of merit they contain. There is no question and in the very nature of things, there can be no question of equality between man and woman, each by the wise decrees of the Creator, or if you prefer the term nature, were fashioned for essentially different spheres of action and endeavor and given the peculiar physical, mental, moral and spiritual qualities and gifts necessary for the sphere assigned in nature's economy, and in that sphere each was made supreme. Where supremacy exists, there can exist no right based on the ground of equality.

Man's sphere is to conquer fortune, build houses, establish laws and execute justice; woman has the nobler, but equally essential sphere of turning the house built by man into the home, to temper his justice with mercy, into his laws infuse virtue, and to her also is confided the divine privilege of rearing the generation to come so that each will be better than the one it succeeds, and so at the last it can be said of them in age as it was said of them in youth, "Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

If the payment of taxes confers the right to the ballot, then it follows, subjection to taxation entitles aliens and all others who own property in our country, to the exercise of the ballot without other qualifications. The claim that woman's enfranchisement would result in the enactment of many laws of the class known as welfare laws has been so often, thoroughly and recently refuted by the citing of actual instances from and conditions existing

in states where woman vote, that it is unnecessary to discuss this claim.

It is true that woman's devotion to the interests of our soldier boys, her patriotic support of the war, her endeavors to alleviate pain, tend the stricken and comfort the suffering are worthy of the best traditions of the sex and entitle them to what they have always held and now hold the first place in the hearts of their country. The claim of franchise on these grounds, however, if it proves anything, proves too much, for under the boys of 18 and of less years now serving their country at home or at the front would be entitled to its exercise and soldiers of the regular army in stations and camps, and old veterans of the civil war now in old soldiers' homes would also be entitled to vote, yet the laws of many, perhaps most of the states, deny such soldiers stationed in their borders and the inmates of such homes the right to vote. I can not think that women honestly advance or sincerely believe in this ground for it is an attempt to commercialize patriotism and make the tender offices of humanity a subject of political traffic.

If the fact that man, without his consent, is born into the world, confers the right of suffrage, it is evident that such a right is based on the fact of parenthood and is conferred without regard to sex, age, intellectual or moral worth, or whether parenthood is acquired from obedience to, or in disobedience of the laws of God and man so it is seen that this ground also proves too much. The fact is that there is no such thing as a right to be conferred as a privilege to be conferred as the interests of the state and society dictate and consequently cannot be challenged as a right by any.

In my judgment, the interests of the state, the interests of society, at least at this time, do not require and will not be advanced by woman suffrage; on the contrary, such interests demand its denial. Government is a man's job. It demands the masculine qualities, the stern exercise of justice and force, the supremacy of reason over affection and the suppression of weakness. All history, none more than that of today, proves that in times of stress, man has had the justice, strength and foresight

to sacrifice the present on the altar of the race that the future might be better and has, unafraid, faced war through knowing that he, the offspring of his joys and the objects of his tenderest affection must be his victims. Woman as a rule does not possess these qualities; she is capable of great self-sacrifice, but incapable of sacrificing the subject of her affections to present suffering and death in order that the welfare of the future of the race may be made secure. Few mothers with sons subject to military duty would initiate or accept the gauge of war in order that from the red welter of battle the security of the future might be born and the happiness of other women's children, yet to be born, made permanent. Yet sacrifices such as these are not only necessary to be made, but are at present being made.

Despite our peaceful intentions we have been driven into war and war calls for the assertion of all our normal qualities to the uttermost, the exercise of "force, force to the limit, without stint," and to permit women now in this day of iron and blood in the midst of the struggle for supremacy between brute force and righteousness, to exercise the functions of government, is to exchange masculine virility for feminine weakness and is little short of calamity. Let us men who are still the guardians of the nation, the nation's women and children and the trustees of the future, be true to our trust and set our hearts like steel and our faces like flint against the insidious appeals of parlor and other socialists and pseudo-philosophers of both sexes to surrender in whole or in part the reins of government. The greatest war of all the ages is no time for experiments in government, no matter what the future of woman suffrage may be, now is no time to make the experiment. The parents of those defending the right of the nation to existence on the battle fields of Europe demand that we meddle not with it now, that we do no act that will expose or may tend to expose them to greater danger, nor render vain the death of those who have and will hereafter die that we may enjoy the benefits of government in peace and security.

# VOTE "NO" ON NEXT TUESDAY